Big Bend National Park and the people who made their way through the region well before then.

H. Res. 483 also honors the National Park Service for their work in the Big Bend.

It is important that we recognize Big Bend National Park's contributions to our Nation as well as the contribution that the park's founders and staff have made to the land since then.

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 483.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER BASIN PROTECTION ACT

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2381) to promote Department of the Interior efforts to provide a scientific basis for the management of sediment and nutrient loss in the Upper Mississippi River Basin, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2381

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Upper Mississippi River Basin Protection Act''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) The terms ''Upper Mississippi River Basin'' and ''Basin'' mean the watershed portion of the Upper Mississippi River and Illinois River basins, from Cairo, Illinois, to the headwaters of the Mississippi River, in the States of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa, and Missouri. The designation includes the Kaskaskia watershed along the Illinois River and the Meramec watershed along the Missouri River.

(2) The terms ''Upper Mississippi River Stewardship Initiative'' and ''Initiative'' mean the activities authorized or required by this Act to monitor nutrient and sediment loss in the Upper Mississippi River Basin.

(3) The term ''sound science'' refers to the use of accepted and documented scientific methods to identify and quantify the sources, transport, and fate of nutrients and sediment and to quantify the effect of various treatment methods or conservation measures on nutrient and sediment loss. Sound science requires the use of documented protocols for data collection and data analysis, and peer review of the data, results, and findings.

SEC. 3. RELIANCE ON SOUND SCIENCE.

It is the policy of Congress that Federal investments in the Upper Mississippi River Basin must be guided by sound science.

TITLE I—SEDIMENT AND NUTRIENT MONITORING NETWORK

SEC. 101. ESTABLISHMENT OF MONITORING NETWORK.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—As part of the Upper Mississippi River Stewardship Initiative, the Secretary of the Interior shall establish a sediment and nutrient monitoring network for the Upper Mississippi River Basin for the purposes of—

(1) identifying and evaluating significant sources of sediment and nutrients in the Upper Mississippi River Basin;

(2) quantifying the processes affecting mobilization, transport, and fate of those sediments and nutrients on land and in water;

(3) quantifying the transport of those sediments and nutrients to and through the Upper Mississippi River Basin;

(4) recording changes to sediment and nutrient loss over time;

(5) providing coordinated data to be used in computer modeling of the Basin, pursuant to section 201; and

(6) identifying major sources of sediment and nutrients within the Basin for the purpose of targeting resources to reduce sediment and nutrient loss.

(b) ROLE OF UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY.—The Secretary of the Interior shall carry out this title acting through the office of the Director of the United States Geological Survey.

SEC. 102. DATA COLLECTION AND STORAGE RESPONSIBILITIES.

(a) GUIDELINES FOR DATA COLLECTION AND STORAGE.—The Secretary of the Interior shall establish guidelines for the effective design of data collection activities regarding sediment and nutrient monitoring, for the use of suitable and consistent methods for data collection, and for consistent reporting, data storage, and archiving practices.

(b) RELEASE OF DATA.—Data resulting from sediment and nutrient monitoring in the Upper Mississippi River Basin shall be released to the public using generic station identifiers and hydrologic unit codes. In the case of a monitoring station located on private lands, information regarding the location of the station shall not be disseminated without the landowner's permission.

(c) PROTECTION OF PRIVACY.—Data resulting from sediment and nutrient monitoring in the Upper Mississippi River Basin is not subject to the mandatory disclosure provisions of section 552 of title 5, United States Code, but may be released only as provided in subsection (b).

SEC. 103. RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING SEDIMENT AND NUTRIENT MONITORING.

(a) INVENTORY.—To the maximum extent practicable, the Secretary of the Interior shall inventory the sediment and nutrient monitoring efforts, in existence as of the date of the enactment of this Act, of Federal, State, local, and nongovernmental entities for the purpose of creating a baseline understanding of overlap, data gaps and redundancies.

(b) INTEGRATION.—On the basis of the inventory, the Secretary of the Interior shall integrate the existing sediment and nutrient monitoring efforts, to the maximum extent practicable, into the sediment and nutrient monitoring network required by section 101.

(c) CONSULTATION AND USE OF EXISTING DATA.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary of the Interior shall make maximum use of data in existence as of the date of the enactment of this Act and of ongoing programs and efforts of Federal, State, tribal, local, and nongovernmental entities in developing the sediment and nutrient monitoring network required by section 101.

(d) COORDINATION WITH LONG-TERM ESTUARY ASSESSMENT PROJECT.—The Secretary of the Interior shall carry out this section in coordination with the long-term estuary assessment project authorized by section 902 of the Estuaries and Clean Waters Act of 2000 (Public Law 106–457; 33 U.S.C. 2901 note).

SEC. 104. COLLABORATION WITH OTHER PUBLIC AND PRIVATE MONITORING EFFORTS.

To establish the sediment and nutrient monitoring network, the Secretary of the Interior shall collaborate, to the maximum extent practicable, with other Federal, State, tribal, local and private sediment and nutrient monitoring programs that meet guidelines prescribed under section 102(a), as determined by the Secretary.

SEC. 105. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.

The Secretary of the Interior shall report to Congress not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act on the development of the sediment and nutrient monitoring network.

SEC. 106. NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL ASSESSMENT.

The National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences shall conduct a comprehensive water resources assessment of the Upper Mississippi River Basin.

TITLE II—COMPUTER MODELING AND RESEARCH

SEC. 201. COMPUTER MODELING AND RESEARCH OF SEDIMENT AND NUTRIENT SOURCES.

(a) MODELING PROGRAM REQUIRED.—As part of the Upper Mississippi River Stewardship Initiative, the Director of the United States Geological Survey shall establish a modeling program to identify significant sources of sediment and nutrients in the Upper Mississippi River Basin.

(b) ROLE.—Computer modeling shall be used to identify subwatersheds which are significant sources of sediment and nutrient loss and shall be made available for the purposes of targeting public and private sediment and nutrient reduction efforts.

(c) COMPONENTS.—Sediment and nutrient models for the Upper Mississippi River Basin shall include the following:

(1) Models to relate nutrient loss to landscape, land use, and land management practices.

(2) Models to relate sediment loss to landscape, land use, and land management practices.

(3) Models to define river channel nutrient transformation processes.

(d) COLLECTION OF ANCILLARY INFORMATION.—Ancillary information shall be collected in a GIS format to support modeling

and management use of modeling results, including the following:

(1) Land use data.

(2) Soils data.

(3) Elevation data.

(4) Information on sediment and nutrient reduction improvement actions.

(5) Remotely sense data.

SEC. 202. USE OF ELECTRONIC MEANS TO DISTRIBUTE INFORMATION.

Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of the United States Geological Survey shall establish a system that uses the telecommunications medium known as the Internet to provide information regarding the following:

(1) Public and private programs designed to reduce sediment and nutrient loss in the Upper Mississippi River Basin.

(2) Information on sediment and nutrient levels in the Upper Mississippi River and its tributaries.

(3) Successful sediment and nutrient reduction projects.

SEC. 203. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.

(a) MONITORING ACTIVITIES.—Commencing one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of the United States Geological Survey shall provide to Congress and make available to the public an annual report regarding monitoring activities conducted in the Upper Mississippi River Basin.

(b) MODELING ACTIVITIES.—Every three years, the Director of the United States Geological Survey shall provide to Congress and make available to the public a progress report regarding modeling activities.

TITLE III—AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS AND RELATED MATTERS

SEC. 301. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY ACTIVITIES.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the United States Geological Survey $6,250,000 each fiscal year to carry out this Act (other than section 106). Of the amounts appropriated for a fiscal year pursuant to this authorization of appropriations, one-third shall be made available for the United States Geological Survey Cooperative Water Program and the remainder shall be made available for the United States Geological Survey Hydrologic Networks and Analysis Program.

(b) WATER RESOURCE AND WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT.—There is authorized to be appropriated $650,000 to allow the National Research Council to perform the assessment required by section 106.

SEC. 302. COST-SHARING REQUIREMENTS.

Funds made available for the United States Geological Survey Cooperative Water Program under section 301(a) shall be subject to the same cost sharing requirements as specified in the last proviso under the heading ''**UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY-SURVEYS, INVESTIGATIONS, AND RESEARCH**'' of the Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2006 (Public Law 109–54; 119 Stat. 510; 43 U.S.C. 50).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES) and the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

□ 1500

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2381 directs the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the United States Geological Survey, to establish a nutrient and sediment monitoring network for the Upper Mississippi River Basin. We strongly support H.R. 2381, championed by our colleague on the Natural Resources Committee, Congressman RON KIND. This bill would put into place a coordinated public-private approach to sediment and nutrient monitoring in the Upper Mississippi River Basin as part of an effort to improve water quality.

The Upper Mississippi River is extremely important not only to the communities and States along the route it flows, but also to the Nation as a whole. Twenty-one years ago, Congress designated this river segment as both a nationally significant ecosystem and a nationally significant navigation system. It is the only inland river in the United States to have such a designation. Our colleague, RON KIND, has worked hard to secure enactment of this legislation. I commend him for his diligent effort on this important bill.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2381.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2381 and yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the Democratic bill manager has more than adequately explained this piece of legislation. The House has passed a similar version of this bill in the previous two Congresses. I am certainly happy to see that we are doing so again.

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of a bill I have authored that will help scientists and local officials make informed, scientifically based decisions about one of the most important natural resources in this country, the Upper Mississippi River.

The Mississippi River is one of America's great national treasures, running right through the heart of this country. It is North America's largest migratory bird flyway, with 40 percent of the continent's waterfowl species using this corridor during their annual migrations. It also waters the Nation's breadbasket, providing the nutrient-rich soils we enjoy in the midwest and water for irrigation. It also provides drinking water for nearly 30 million Americans and a passageway for billions of dollars in commerce.

But, the Mississippi is threatened by increasing sediment and nutrient flows that gum up the river and poison its ecosystems. H.R. 2381, The Upper Mississippi River Basin Protection Act, is a commonsense piece of legislation that would establish a coordinated public-private approach to reducing these threats, which affect all parts of the river and even the Gulf of Mexico where nutrients have created and continue to enlarge the gulf dead zone.

We can address these issues, but we need hard scientific data to do it. That is where this bill comes in. H.R. 2381 establishes a sub-basin monitoring program whereby the United States Geological Service will monitor where nutrients enter the river and use computer modeling to follow the nutrient flows downstream. This will allow local conservationists and land managers to pinpoint exactly where conservation and education are most needed.

This scientific approach has received widespread approval and been endorsed by the five Upper Mississippi State Governors. I thank the Natural Resources Committee staff for helping put this innovative piece of legislation together, and I thank the chairman for his support of the bill. This bill has passed the House in each of the last three Congresses, and I urge my colleagues to support it again today.

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time. I do understand that Representative KIND has been delayed, as well, by the storm; and he wanted to be here.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2381.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SUPPORTING HOME OWNERSHIP AND RESPONSIBLE LENDING

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 526) supporting home ownership and responsible lending.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 526

Whereas home ownership is an important part of realizing the American Dream;

Whereas home ownership is a powerful economic stimulus, both for individual homeowners and for the national economy;

Whereas home ownership also benefits neighborhoods by raising property values and by providing economic and social capital in previously distressed communities;

Whereas in 2006, more than 75,000,000 Americans owned homes, and the home ownership rate was nearly 69 percent, a near record high;

Whereas the home ownership rate for non-Hispanic whites in 2006 was 76 percent, while the rate for African American households was only 48.2 percent; Hispanic households were at 49.5 percent, and Asian, Native Americans, and Pacific Islanders were at 60 percent;

Whereas this Nation experienced a housing boom from 2001 to 2006, due to historically low mortgage rates, rising home prices, and increased liquidity in the secondary mortgage market, all factors that led to the growth of the sub-prime mortgage industry;